



For Immediate Release

Easton, MD – June 15, 2022

Contact: Clay B. Stamp

County Manager

cbstamp@talbotcountymd.gov

410-770-8010

Talbot County Council Meeting Highlights, Tuesday, June 14, 2022

These highlights only reflect the business items covered from the Council's approved agenda. To view the complete County Council meeting, please visit: Talbot County Meeting Videos - Talbot County, Maryland (www.talbotcountymd.gov).

Council members Callahan, Leshner, Divilio, and Pack were in attendance. Council member Price was absent.

Introduction of Numbered Resolutions:

First two numbered resolutions are to amend the County's Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan for specific projects (new South Well for the Town of Easton and Estates at Gannon Farm subdivision).

- A. A RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE TALBOT COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE WATER AND SEWER PLAN FOR THE PURPOSE OF ADDING OR MODIFYING THE TALBOT COUNTY CAPITAL PROJECT FOR FISCAL YEARS 2023 AND 2024 TO ADD A NEW CAPITAL PROJECT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$1.5 MILLION FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW SOUTH WELL FOR THE TOWN OF EASTON was introduced as Resolution No. 330 by Council President Callahan, Vice President Leshner and Members Divilio and Pack. The public hearing will be held on Tuesday, July 12, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.
- B. A RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE TALBOT COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE WATER AND SEWER PLAN FOR THE PURPOSE OF RECLASSIFYING AND REMAPPING TWO PARCELS OF REAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT 29659 MATTHEWSTOWN ROAD (MARYLAND ROUTE 328), EASTON, MARYLAND, SHOWN ON TAX MAP 26 AS PARCEL 45 AND LOCATED ON CAMAC STREET, EASTON, MARYLAND, SHOWN ON TAX MAP 26 AS PARCEL 186, FROM "W-2" AND "S-2", PLANNED WATER AND SEWER SERVICE IN 3 TO 5 YEARS, TO "W-1" AND "S-1", IMMEDIATE PRIORITY STATUS was introduced as Resolution No. 331 by

Council President Callahan and Council member Divilio. The public hearing will be held on Tuesday, July 12, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.

- C. A RESOLUTION TO PLACE QUESTIONS ON THE BALLOT AT THE 2022 GENERAL ELECTION TO AMEND SECTION 207 OF THE CHARTER OF TALBOT COUNTY TO INCREASE THE COMPENSATION OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL FROM \$14,400 PER ANNUM TO \$25,000 PER ANNUM, WITH THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT TO RECEIVE AN ADDITIONAL \$1,000 PER ANNUM AND TO PROVIDE THAT THE COUNCIL MAY SET, BY RESOLUTION, COMPENSATION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL DIFFERING FROM THAT SET FORTH IN SECTION 207; PROVIDED, HOWEVER, THAT SUCH RESOLUTION SHALL REQUIRE AT LEAST A FOUR-FIFTHS VOTE OF THE COUNCIL, BE ADOPTED PRIOR TO THE NEXT GENERAL ELECTION FOR THE OFFICE OF COUNCIL MEMBER, AND TAKE EFFECT COMMENCING WITH THE FORTHCOMING COUNCIL TERM was introduced as Resolution No. 332 by Council President Callahan, Vice President Lesher and Council member Pack. The public hearing will be held on Tuesday, July 12, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.

If Resolution No. 332 is approved by four-fifths of the members of the full Council, there will be a ballot question in November 2022 and if approved, the increases will take effect beginning with the 2022-2026 Council.

Council President Callahan stated, “The last time the salary was adjusted was in 2002. I’m not in this seat for the money. I think it is up to the public to decide. I want everybody to understand that it’s a hard job and you have to really love doing this.”

Council Vice President Lesher added, “I’m not sure that \$25,000 is necessarily the right amount. I don’t think anybody up here is doing this for the compensation. That said, does Council compensation actually bar some people from actually considering doing this public service. It does seem like a significant jump over the \$14,400. It might be appropriate for us to look at what Caroline and Dorchester counties are doing with their Council compensation.”

Public Hearings on FY23 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Projects 6:30 p.m.

Mary Kay Verdery reported on two FY23 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) applications. CDBG requires a public hearing to be held before the submittal of a grant application.

Habitat for Humanity Choptank – 122 S. Locust Lane, Easton, MD 21601 – Seeking \$100,000 for Rehabilitation of Single-Family Home in Historic Area of Easton – The current project will address unmet low-income housing needs by creating affordable housing ownership opportunities in the historic area of Easton known as The Hill. This strategy for creating quality and affordable housing is to rehabilitate existing homes and abandoned and dilapidated properties. While at a greater cost, rehabilitating a historic

home, particularly a home in The Hill District of Easton is a demonstration of the community's commitment to its vibrant history.

Habitat representatives, Wayne Suggs, Construction Director, and John Puposzar, Critical Home Repair Manager, reported that they have received approval from the Easton Historic District Commission for the project.

Council member Leshar stated, "I want to commend Habitat Choptank for doing this greater degree of difficulty rehabilitation of existing housing stock rather than simply building new on fresh dirt. That kind of commitment to the community and to the character of the community in which you're building should be commended. This is a terrific project and I'm thrilled that we can help channel some of this block grant funding to make this financially work for the project."

Building African American Minds (BAAM) – 31 Jowite Street, Easton, MD 21601- Seeking \$347,138 for the construction of a three-story Academic Center. This is a small portion of nearly \$7 million of the overall project total. BAAM will continue to provide after-school and summer programs and expand to new services that will include workforce development programming for youth ages 18 to 20, as well as services to parents and community members, such as financial literacy workshops, job skills, behavioral health, health services, parenting education training, as well as other programs services.

BAAM Representatives: Dina Daly, Co-Founder and Executive Director, and Intern Malcolm Richards were available for questions. Daly reported that this past year, BAAM heard from the community and its families and started a girl's program and will be adding a new class each year. While BAAM does serve predominantly African American students, its program is open to all youth.

Council member Divilio stated, "I learned that the Chesapeake College enrollment for the fall is 67% women and that across the country, community colleges are seeing a very steep slide in men not going to college and not extending their academics. So, knowing that you are trying to set up a program that will allow individuals to take the first step to getting their GED is important. I also love Chesapeake College and all the programs that they have that benefit all five counties. I'm glad to see the partnerships that you're making with them."

Council member Pack adds, "This is quite a bold endeavor. But BAAM has taken on challenges like this in the past and seems to rise to the occasion, so I don't have any doubt they will achieve their goal. I remember going back 20 years ago and talking to Derick about closing the achievement gap. We want to give the students the best chance they possibly can have."

Council President Callahan says, "I was proud to be at yesterday's event when you were awarded the 2021 William Donald Schaefer *Helping People Award* for Talbot County from Comptroller Peter Franchot. Congratulations on your recognition."

Introduction of Administrative Resolutions

The second step of the CDBG process is to adopt Administrative Resolutions by Council to formally approve the submittal of the following applications:

ADMINISTRATIVE RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) SFY23 APPLICATION FOR HABITAT FOR HUMANITY CHOPTANK FOR THE REHABILITATION OF A HOME LOCATED AT 122 S. LOCUST LANE, EASTON, MARYLAND 21601

Council voted unanimously to approve the administrative resolution.

ADMINISTRATIVE RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) SFY23 APPLICATION FOR BUILDING AFRICAN AMERICAN MINDS (BAAM), 31 JOWITE STREET, EASTON, MARYLAND 21601 FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN ACADEMIC CENTER

Council voted unanimously to approve the administrative resolution.

Public Hearings:

Bill No. 1499, A BILL TO AMEND CHAPTER 56 (ELECTRICAL STANDARDS) OF THE TALBOT COUNTY CODE FOR THE PURPOSES OF INCORPORATING AMENDMENTS TO THE MARYLAND ELECTRICIANS ACT ENACTED BY THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY PURSUANT TO SENATE BILL 762 – CHAPTER 708, ACTS OF 2021 AND INCORPORATING THE NATIONAL ELECTRICAL CODE, AS UPDATED FROM TIME TO TIME, AS THE MINIMUM STANDARD FOR ELECTRICAL WORK IN TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND

Council voted unanimously to move the bill to third reader and voted unanimously to approve Bill 1499.

Bill No. 1500, A BILL TO AMEND CHAPTER 60 (ETHICS PROVISIONS) OF THE TALBOT COUNTY CODE FOR THE PURPOSES OF INCORPORATING AMENDMENTS ENACTED BY THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY PURSUANT TO HOUSE BILL 879 – CHAPTER 31, ACTS OF 2017, HOUSE BILL 363 – CHAPTER 252, ACTS OF 2021, AND HOUSE BILL 1058 – CHAPTER 425, ACTS OF 2021 AND PROVIDING THAT THE MEMBERS OF CERTAIN COUNTY BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES SHALL BE SUBJECT TO CHAPTER 60 AS NONELECTED OFFICIALS

County Attorney Patrick Thomas explained that members of certain County boards, commissions and committees are subject to the Chapter 60 provisions – currently the Electrical Board, Board of Appeals and Planning Commission. Bill 1500 adds the following boards, commissions and committees: Agricultural Resolution Board, Ethics Commission, Golf Board, Airport Board, Historic Preservation Commission, Public Works Advisory Board, Short Term Rental Review Board, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, Police Accountability Board, and Administrative Charging Committee.

Council member Pack explained, “We started this process dealing with the Police Accountability Board that had to be incorporated into the Ethics Code. While we were looking at that, we noticed that there were a number of other boards and County Council's purview that we felt also needed to be covered under the Ethics Code for various reasons.”

Council member Divilio added, “It takes effort to be on any of these boards. And there are times when all of us have had to recuse ourselves, as well as individuals on these boards because we're a small town and it is a small community. We all do know one another and we try to take care of one another. So, it is very important to me that all boards and commissions are included in practice. These are the individuals who step up and deserve our respect, and our admiration for doing so. And, I just want to take the time to say thank you to all these individuals when you look at the number of boards and committees that we work with to advise us that is a very large cross-section of the community.”

Council voted unanimously to move the bill to third reader and voted unanimously to approve Bill 1500.

Eligible for Vote:

Resolution No. 328, A RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE TALBOT COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE WATER AND SEWER PLAN TO REVISE CHAPTER THREE – AMENDMENT PROCEDURES

County Attorney Patrick Thomas explained that this resolution as initially introduced would have provided amendments to the Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan if it's initiated by the county, can be introduced on any legislative day instead of on the first legislative day every quarter. It also provided that the application provisions outlined in chapter three of the Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan don't apply when the county is the one initiating the amendment. Subsequently, the Council introduced Amendment No. 1 to this resolution, which deletes the language about the application provisions not applying to the county. To simplify, this states that the amendments initiated by the county may be introduced on any legislative day. The amendment to this resolution was recommended to the Council by the Public Works Advisory Board.

Council member Corey Pack added, “If the county needs to issue an amendment they don't have to rush to get it done to meet that quarterly deadline quarterly requirement that could be seen as burdensome. It allows the Council more flexibility.”

Council voted unanimously to approve Amendment No. 1 to Resolution No. 328. Council voted unanimously to approve Resolution No. 328, as amended.

Council Discussion of Proposed Text Amendments:

- Application by Talbot Country Club, Inc., 6141 Country Club Drive, Easton, Maryland to Amend the Talbot County Code Section 190-78 “Terms Defined” to add a definition of the term “Country Club” and Section 190-48.3 to add a new subsection “F. Expansion of the uses and structures of a country club in the RC District” (need specific new language)

Willard “Burry” Parker, attorney for the applicant, provided an overview of the requested text amendment. Council member Pack moved that the text amendment be forwarded to the Planning Commission for their review and recommendation back to the Council for consideration of a bill introduction.

- Application by Ryan Showalter, Esq., MDSW, 100 N. West Street, Easton, Maryland to amend the Talbot County Code Sections 190-15 “Critical Area Overlay District (CAO),” 190-31 “Marine Uses,” 190-33 “Accessory uses,” and 190-78 “Terms defined” regarding erosion control measures, piers and riparian structures
Ryan Showalter provided an overview of the requested text amendment. Council member Pack moved that the text amendment be forwarded to the Planning Commission for their review and recommendation back to the Council for consideration of a bill introduction.

County Manager’s Report:

- Request from Department of Public Works to Award Bid No. 22-06, TALBOT COUNTY SANITARY DISTRICT – SEPTIC SYSTEM CONNECTIONS TO COUNTY SEWER - THREE (3) YEAR CONTRACT – TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND to THREE (3) YEAR CONTRACT – TALBOT COUNTY, MARYLAND – Requested Council approval to award Bid No. 22-06 to CHT Excavating, LLC and EastComm Ltd to install grinder pump systems and septic tank effluent pump (STEP) systems throughout the Talbot County Sanitary District. Department of Public Works will negotiate the best pricing and installation strategies for an actual project. Funding for this project is through the State Bay Restoration Fund.

Council voted unanimously to award Bid No. 22-06 as outlined.

Council Comments:

Council Vice President added, “I offer my congratulations to the 57 graduates of St. Michaels Middle High School on May 31 and the 278 graduates of Easton High School on June 3. What our school systems are doing today is truly amazing. They really are not letting students fall between the cracks. They are not lowering standards and are ensuring that these students are college or career ready. There are freshly graduated students who are already entering our workforce locally, where they are most needed and we have a few who are signing up to serve in the U.S. Armed Forces which is to be commended. So, my congratulations to all of those graduates.”

Council member Pack commented, “I just want to make a public plea for election judges and election officials. This is a big primary election coming in July with the governor's race and the Comptroller and we need the help of Talbot County citizens and Talbot County employees to serve in this way.”

Council President Callahan added, “I was honored to attend the 100th anniversary of the Avalon Theatre. It was pretty special and showed you how special this community is. I was proud to be a part of it.”

Mr. Stamp announced County Offices will be closed on June 20 for Juneteenth. He also noted that the State Highway Administration will be resurfacing Maryland Route 329 (Royal Oak Road) between Tuesday, June 21 and Friday, July 15. Work will occur on Monday through Thursday from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., excluding holidays.

The Council's next meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 28, 2022 at 6 p.m. in the Bradley Meeting Room.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:47 p.m.